

10 December 1963

The Cuban Fishing Fleet

1. The rapidly expanding Cuban fishing fleet now contains well over 200 boats of various types and sizes regularly working in the waters of the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Atlantic. Many of these are new and modernly designed boats constructed in Cuba during the past two years and capable of lengthy stays at sea. According to Cuban press accounts, forty of the 33' long Sigma class boats and 40 of the 25' long Eta class boats were delivered to the Cuban fishing fleet during 1962 and 1963. In addition, Cuban shipyards were constructing fifty of the larger 75' Lambda class boats as of June 1963 and had set the goal of producing 88 of the boats by the end of the year. In addition, Cuba has ~~received~~^{seven} sea-going trawlers built for it in Poland and Japan and five of the 19 to 22 Soviet fishing boats that have been operating out of Cuba are scheduled to be turned over to the Cubans.

2. The expansion of the Cuban fishing industry is a high-priority project in the Soviet technical assistance program. According to a 6 December Havana radio broadcast, the Cuban goal is to have over 900 modern fishing boats in operation by 1970.

3. The expansion of the Cuban fishing fleet under the Soviet aid program is linked to ~~expansion~~ the construction of a ~~fishing~~ base in Cuba for the Soviet fishing fleet. Construction began early this year in Havana harbor and when completed it is to be capable of handling 130 Soviet trawlers. Thus, a significant expansion of Soviet fishing operations in the Caribbean and Eastern Atlantic is in prospect.

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